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"We are in our Fathers' House."

SPEECH

OF

HON. BENJAMIN H. HILL

OF GEORGIA,

ON THE

GENERAL AMNESTY BILL.

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES JANUARY 11, 1876.

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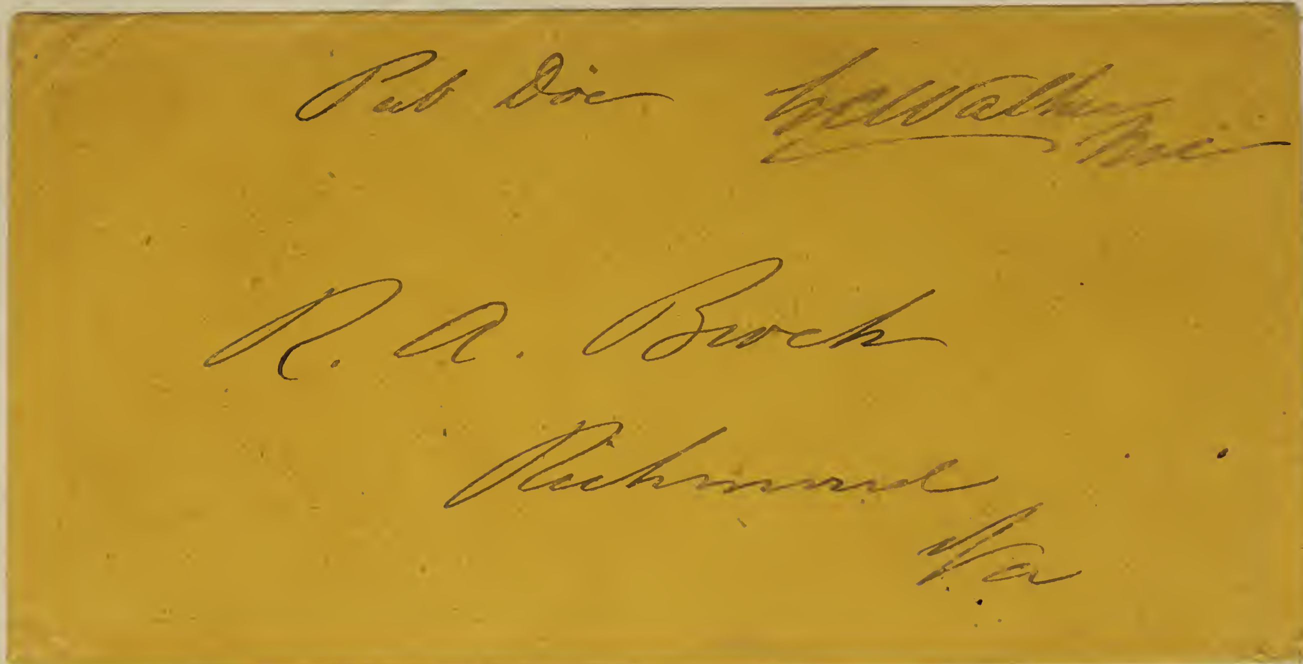
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SPEECH.

The House having under consideration the bill (H. R. No. 214) to remove the disabilities imposed by the third section of the fourteenth article of the amendment of the Constitution of the United States, the pending question being on the motion of Mr. BLAINE to reconsider the motion by which the bill was rejected—

Mr. HILL said:

Mr. SPEAKER: The House will bear witness that we have not sought this discussion. Nothing can be farther from our desire and purpose than to raise such discussion.

Mr. ATKINS. I rise to a point of order. The whole House desires to hear the gentleman from Georgia, but it is impossible for them to do so unless gentlemen retain their seats.

The SPEAKER. The point of order is well taken, and gentlemen will retain their seats; and order must be preserved not only within the bar but outside the bar, and the Chair directs the Doorkeeper to give especial attention to the maintenance of order outside the bar.

Mr. HILL. I say, Mr. Speaker, that nothing could have been farther from the desires and purposes of those who with me represent immediately the section of country which on yesterday was put upon trial, than to re-open this discussion of the events of our unhappy past. We had well hoped that the country had suffered long enough from feuds, from strife, and from inflamed passions, and we came here, sir, with a patriotic purpose, to remember nothing but the country and the whole country, and, turning our backs upon all the horrors of the past, to look with all earnestness to find glories for the future.

The gentleman who is the acknowledged leader of the Republican party on this floor, who is the aspiring leader of the Republican party of this country, representing most manifestly the wishes of many of his associates—not all—has willed otherwise. They seem determined that the wounds which were healing shall be re-opened, that the passions which were hushing shall be re-inflamed. Sir, I wish this House to understand that we do not reciprocate either the purpose or the manifest desire of the gentlemen on the other side, and while we feel it our imperative duty to vindicate the truth of history as regards the section which we represent, feeling that it is a portion of this common country, we do not intend to say anything calculated to aid the gentlemen in their work of crimination and recrimination and of keeping up the war by politicians after brave men have said the war shall end. The gentleman from Maine on yesterday presented to the country two questions which he manifestly intends to be the fundamental principles of the Republican party, or at least of those who follow him in that party. The first is what he is pleased to term the magnanimity and grace of the Republican party; the second is the brutality of those whom he is pleased to term "the Rebels." Upon the first question I do not propose to weary the House to-day. If with the history of the last fifteen years fresh in the memory of this people the country is prepared to talk about the grace and magnanimity of the Republican party, argument would be wasted. With master enslaved, intelligence disfranchised, society disorganized, industry paralyzed, States subverted, Legislatures dispersed by the bayonet, the people can accord to that party the verdict of grace and magnanimity, may God save the future of our country from grace and magnanimity.

I advance directly to that portion of the gentleman's argument which relates to the question before the House. The gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr RANDALL] has presented to this House, and he asks it to adopt, a bill on the subject of amnesty which is precisely the same as the bill passed in this House by the gentleman's own party, as I understand it, at the last session of Congress. The gentle-

man from Maine has moved a reconsideration of the vote by which it was rejected, avowing his purpose to be to offer an amendment. The main purpose of that amendment is to except from the operation of the bill one of the citizens of this country, Mr. Jefferson Davis.

He alleges two distinct reasons why he asks the House to make that exception. I will state those reasons in the gentleman's own language. First, he says that "Mr. Davis was the author, knowingly, deliberately, guiltily, and willfully, of the gigantic murder and crime at Andersonville." That is a grave indictment. He then characterizes in his second position what he calls the horrors of Andersonville. And he says of them:

> And I hear, before God, measuring my words, knowing their full extent and import, declare that neither the deeds of the Duke of Alva in the Low countries, nor the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, nor the thumb-screws and engines of torture of the Spanish Inquisition, begin to compare in atrocity with the hideous crimes of Andersonville.

Sir, he stands before the country with his very fame in peril if he, having made such charges, shall not sustain them. Now I take up the propositions of the gentleman in their order. I hope no gentleman imagines that I am here to pass in eulogy upon Mr. Davis. The record upon which his fame must rest has been made up, and he and his friends have transmitted that record to the only judge who will give him an impartial judgment—an honest, unimpassioned posterity. In the meantime, no eulogy from me can help him, no censure from the gentleman can damage him, and no act or resolution of this House can affect him. But the charge is that he is a murderer, and a deliberate, wilful, guilty, scheming murderer of "thousands of our fellow-citizens." Why, sir, knowing the character of the honorable gentleman from Maine, his high reputation, when I heard the charge fall from his lips I thought surely the gentleman had made a recent discovery, and I listened for the evidence to justify that charge. He produced it; and what is it? To my utter amazement, as the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. KELLEY] has well stated, it is nothing on earth but a report of a committee of this Congress, made when passions were at their height, and it was known to the gentleman and to the whole country eight years ago.

Now, I say first in relation to that testimony that it is exclusively *ex parte*. It was taken when the gentleman who is now put upon trial by it before the country was imprisoned and in chains, without a hearing and without an opportunity to be heard. It was taken by enemies. It was taken in the midst of fury and rage. If there is anything in Anglo-Saxon law which ought to be considered sacred, it is the high privilege of an Englishman not to be condemned until he shall be confronted with the witnesses against him. But that is not all. The testimony produced by the gentleman is not only *ex parte*, not only exclusively the production of enemies, or at least taken by them and in the midst of passion, but the testimony is mutilated, ingeniously mutilated, palpably mutilated, most adroitly mutilated. Why, sir, one of the main witnesses is Dr. Joseph Jones, a very excellent gentleman, who was called upon to give his testimony in what is called the Wirz trial, and which is produced before this House and attention called to it by the gentleman. The object of the gentleman was to prove that Mr. Davis knew of these atrocities at Andersonville, and he calls the attention of the House to the report of this committee, and thanks God that it has been taken in time to be put where it can neither be contradicted nor gainsaid, as a perpetual guide to posterity to find out the authors of these crimes.

One of the most striking and remarkable pieces of evidence in this whole report is found in the report made by Dr. Jones, a surgeon of fine character, and sent to Andersonville by the confederate authorities to investigate the condition of that prison. That gentleman made his report, and it is brought into this House. What is it? The first point is as to the knowledge of this report going to any of the authorities at Richmond. Here is what Dr. Jones says:

> I had just completed the report, which I placed in the hands of the judge advocate, under orders from the Government, when the confederacy went to pieces. That report never was delivered to the surgeon general, and I was unaware that any one knew of its existence until I received orders from the United States Government to bring it and deliver it to this court in testimony.

Now, he was ordered by the United States Government, the first time this report ever saw the light, to bring it and deliver it on the trial of Wirz. In accordance with that order he did bring it and deliver it to the Judge-Advocate-General. And when the report itself, or that which purported to be the report, was presented to him while he was a witness he discovered that it was mutilated, and he asked permission to state that fact. Hear what he says on that subject:

> I beg leave to make a statement to the court. That portion of my report which has been read is only a small part of the report. The real report contains the excuses which were given by the

officers present at Andersonville, which I thought it right to embody with my report. It also contains documents forwarded to Richmond by Dr. White and Dr. Stevenson, and others in charge of the hospitals. Those documents contained important facts as to the labors of the medical department and their efforts to better the condition of things.

All that part of the report is suppressed, and with that suppression this magnificent receptacle of truth is filed away in the document-room for the information of posterity.

The committee ask him:

Question. Are your conclusions correctly stated in this extract?

Answer. Part of my conclusions are stated—not the whole. A portion of my conclusions, and also my recommendations, are not stated.

Q. Well, touching the subject of exchange?

A. Yes, sir; the general difficulties environing the prisoners and their officers.

Q. What became of your original report?

A. This is my original report.

That is, he had there the extract as far as it went.

Q. Did you make this extract yourself?

The committee seem to suspect that he was the man that simply made the extract and brought it before the committee. Now, here is his answer:

I did not. My original report is in the hands of the judge-advocate. I delivered it into his hands immediately upon my arrival in Washington.

And this committee of Congress to which the gentleman refers absolutely tells us that this mutilated report was the one introduced in evidence against this man Wirz, and it is the one incorporated in this book.

Now I want to call attention to another extract from that original report—a part not included in this book. There are a great many such omissions; I have not been able to get all of them.

Dr. Jones in his report is giving an account of the causes of the sickness and mortality at Andersonville; and he says, among other things:

Surrounded by these depressing agents, the postponement of the general exchange of prisoners and the constantly receding hopes of deliverance through the action of their own Government, depressed their already desponding spirits and destroyed those mental and moral energies so necessary for a successful struggle against disease and its agents. Homesickness and disappointment, mental depression and distress, attending the daily longing for an apparently hopeless release, are felt to be as potent agencies in the destruction of these prisoners as the physical causes of actual disease.

Ah! why that homesickness, that longing and the distress consequent upon it, and its effect in carrying those poor, brave, unfortunate heroes to death? I will tell this house before I am done.

Now, sir, there is another fact. Wirz was put on trial, but really Mr. Davis was the man intended to be tried through him. Over one hundred and sixty witnesses were introduced before the military commission. The trial lasted three months. The whole country was under military despotism; citizens labored under duress; and quite a large number of confederates were seeking to make favor with the powers of the Government. Yet, sir, during those three months, with all the witnesses they could bring to Washington, not one single man ever mentioned the name of Mr. Davis in connection with a single atrocity at Andersonville or elsewhere. The gentleman from Maine, with all his research into all the histories of the Duke of Alva and the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the Spanish inquisition, has not been able to frighten up such a witness yet.

Now, sir, there is a witness on this subject. Wirz was condemned, found guilty, sentenced to be executed; and I have now before me the written statement of his counsel, a northern man and a Union man. He gave this statement to the country, and it has never been contradicted.

Hear what this gentleman says:

On the night before the execution of the prisoner Wirz a telegram was sent to the northern press from this city stating that Wirz had made important disclosures to General L. C. Baker, the well-known detective, implicating Jefferson Davis, and that the confession would probably be given to the public. On the same evening some parties came to the confessor of Wirz, Rev Father Boyle, and also to me as his counsel, one of them informing me that a high Cabinet officer wished to assure Wirz that if he would implicate Jefferson Davis with atrocities committed at Andersonville his sentence would be commuted. The messenger requested me to inform Wirz of this. In presence of Father Boyle I told Wirz next morning what had happened.

Hear the reply:

Captain Wirz simply and quietly replied: "Mr. Schade, you know that I have always told you that I do not know anything about Jefferson Davis. He had no connection with me as to what was done at Andersonville. I would not become a traitor against him or anybody else even to save my life."

Sir, what Wirz, within two hours of his execution, would not say for his life the gentleman from Maine says to the country to keep himself and his party in power.

Christianity is a falsehood, humanity is a lie, civilization is a cheat, or the man who would not make a false charge for his life was never guilty of wilful murder.

He who makes a charge must produce his witnesses. They must be informed witnesses. They must be creditable witnesses. The gentleman from Maine makes his charge, but produces no witnesses. He says that men sent by Jefferson Davis to Andersonville were his officers, executing his orders, commissioned by him, and he therefore charges Mr. Davis with these atrocities by inference. It was only when the gentleman reached that portion of his argument that I thought I began to discover the real purpose of his movement. I will not charge him with it, but a suggestion came immediately to my mind.

What was the proposition which the gentleman proposes to establish? It is that those high in authority are to be charged with the sins and treacheries of their agents, commissioned by them and acting under their orders. Is the gentleman artfully—I beg pardon—under the cover of the prejudice and passion against Jefferson Davis, seeking to assault President Grant? If Jefferson Davis sent General Winder to Andersonville, why President Grant sent McDonald and Joyce to St. Louis. [Laughter.] Nay, more, sir; is not the very secretary of the White House, the private confidential secretary, indicted to-day for complicity in these frauds? Does the gentleman want to establish a rule of construction by which he can authorize the country to arraign General Grant for complicity in the whisky frauds? [Laughter.]

Sir, is General Grant responsible for the Credit Mobilier? Was he a stockholder in the Sanborn contracts? Was he copartner in the frauds upon this District? With all his witnesses, the gentleman never can find a single man who was confidential secretary to Mr. Davis and charged with complicity in crime, that Mr. Davis ever indorsed any man as fit for office who was even gravely charged with any complicity in fraud. Yet the gentleman's President, as I understand it, absolutely sent to the Senate of the United States for confirmation to a high office the very man who stood charged before the country with the grossest peculations and frauds in this District, and that, too, after these charges were made and while the investigation was pending.

Sir, I am neither the author nor the disciple of such political logic. And I will not, nor would I for any consideration, assume the proposition before this House to punish an enemy which would implicate the President of the United States in the grossest frauds. Yet if the gentleman's proposition be true, General Grant, instead of being entitled to a third Presidential term, is entitled to twenty terms in twenty penitentiaries. But, sir, he is not guilty. The argument is false. It is a libel upon the American rule of law and English precedent. You cannot find its precedent anywhere in any civilized country. I acquit General Grant of complicity in the whisky frauds and revenue frauds, and the facts acquit Mr. Davis of complicity in any atrocity anywhere.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I pass from the construction of that question to the real facts about Andersonville. First, I want to call the attention of the House to the law of the Confederate Government on the subject of the treatment of prisoners. I read from the act of the Confederate Congress on that subject; it was very simple, and directed—

> The rations furnished prisoners of war shall be the same in quantity and quality as those furnished to enlisted men in the army of the Confederacy.

That was the law; that was the law Mr. Davis approved, and that was the law that he, so far as his agency was concerned, executed.

The gentleman in his speech has gone so far as to say that Mr. Davis purposely sent General Winder to Andersonville to organize a den of horrors and kill Federal soldiers. I do not quote exactly his language, but I know it is "to organize a den of horrors;" but I am sure I cannot use any language more bitter than the gentleman used himself. Therefore the next thing I shall read is the order given for the purpose of locating this prison at Andersonville, or wherever it should be properly located. The official order for the location of the stockade enjoins that it should be in a "healthy locality, with plenty of pure water, with a running stream, and, if possible, with shade trees, and in the immediate neighborhood of grist and saw mills." That does not look like the organization of a den of horrors to commit murder. That was the official order. That was not all. These prisoners at Andersonville were not only allowed the rations measured out to Confederate soldiers both in quantity and quality in every resepect, but they were allowed also to buy as much outside as they desired; a privilege, I am reliably informed, which was not extended to many of the Confederate prisoners. I do not know how this is.

I do not wish to charge it if the facts were otherwise. But in the book which the gentleman from Maine himself produces we find this testimony, given by a Union soldier. He says:

We never had any difficulty in getting vegetables; we used to buy almost anything that we wanted of the sergeant who called the roll mornings and nights. His name was Smith, I think; he was Captain Wirz's chief sergeant. We were divided into messes, eight in each mess; my mess used to buy from two to four bushels of sweet potatoes a week, at the rate of $15 Confederate money per bushel.

They got $20 of Confederate money for $1 of greenbacks in those days.

Turnips were bought at $20 a bushel. We had to buy our own soap for washing our own persons and clothing; we bought meat and eggs and biscuit. There seemed to be an abundance of those things; they were in the market constantly. That sergeant used to come down with a wagon-load of potatoes at a time, bringing twenty or twenty-five bushels at a load sometimes.

Now, sir, Mr. Davis himself alluded to that privilege which was allowed to the Federal soldiers. The Confederate authorities not only allowed them to purchase supplies as they pleased outside, in addition to the rations allowed them by law—the same rations allowed to Confederate soldiers—but he says:

By an indulgence perhaps unprecedented, we have even allowed the prisoners in our hands to be supplied by their friends at home with comforts not enjoyed by the men who captured them in battle,

The Confederate Government gave Federal prisoners the same rations the Confederate soldiers in the field received. Federal prisoners had permission to buy whatever else they pleased, and the Confederates gave their friends at home permission to furnish them the means to do so. And yet, Mr. Speaker, it is true that, in spite of all these advantages enjoyed by these prisoners, there were horrors, and great horrors, at Andersonville. What were the causes of those horrors? The first was want of medicine. That is given as a cause by Dr. Jones in his testimony; that is given by this very Father Hamilton, from whom the gentleman from Maine read. In the very same testimony which the gentleman read Father Hamilton says:

I conversed with Dr. White with regard to the condition of the men, and he told me it was not in his power to do anything for them: that he had no medicine, and could not get any, and that he was doing everything in his power to help them.

Now, how was it that medicines and other essential supplies could not be obtained? Unfortunately they were not in the Confederacy. The Federal Government made medicine contraband of war. And I am not aware that any other nation on the earth ever did such a thing before—not even the Duke of Alva, sir. The Confederate Government, unable to introduce medicine according to its right under the laws of nations, undertook to run the blockade, and whenever possible the Federal Navy captured its ships and took the medicines. Then, when no other resource was left, when it was suspected that the women of the North—the earth's angels, God bless them—would carry quinine and other medicines of that sort, so much needed by the Federal prisoners in the South, Federal officers were charged to capture the women and examine their petticoats, to keep them from carrying medicines to Confederate soldiers and to Federal prisoners, and they were imprisoned. Surely, sir, the Confederate Government and the southern people are not to be blamed for a poverty in medicines, food, and raiment enforced by the stringent war measures of the Federal Government—a poverty which had its intended effect of immeasurable distress to the Confederate armies, although it incidentally inflicted unavoidable distress upon the Federal prisoners in the South.

The Federal Government made clothing contraband of war. It sent down its armies and they burned up the factories of the South wherever they could find them, for the express purpose of preventing the Confederates from furnishing clothing to their soldiers, and the Federal prisoners of course shared this deprivation of comfortable clothing. It was the war policy of the Federal Government to make supplies scarce. Dr. Jones in his testimony and Father Hamilton in his testimony, which I will not stop to read to the House, explained why clothing was so scarce to Federal prisoners.

Now then, sir, whatever horrors existed at Andersonville, not one of them could be attributed to a single act of legislation of the Confederate Government or to a single order of the Confederate Government, but every horror of Andersonville grew out of the necessities of the occasion, which necessities were cast upon the Confederacy by the war policy of the other side. The gentleman from Maine said that no Confederate prisoner was ever maltreated in the North. And when my friend answered from his seat "a thousand witnesses to the contrary in Georgia alone," the gentleman from Maine joined issue, but as usual produced no testi-

mony in support of his issue. I think the gentleman from Maine is to be excused. For ten years unfortunately he and his have been reviling the people who were not allowed to come here to meet the reviling. Now, sir, we are face to face, and when you make a charge you must bring your proof. The time has passed when the country can except the impudence of assertion for the force of argument or recklessness of statement for the truth of history.

Now, sir, I do not wish to unfold the chapter on the other side. I am an American. I honor my country, and my whole country, and it could be no pleasure to me to bring forward proof that any portion of my countrymen have been guilty of wilful murder or of cruel treatment to poor manacled prisoners. Nor will I make any such charge. These horrors are inseparable, many of them and most of them from a state of war. I hold in my hand a letter written by one who was a surgeon at the prison at Elmira, and he says:

The winter of 1864–1865, was an unusually severe and rigid one, and the prisoners arriving from the Southern States during this season were mostly old men and lads, clothed in attire suitable only to the genial climate of the South. I need not state to you that this alone was ample cause for an unusual mortality among them. The surroundings were of the following nature, namely: narrow, confined limits, but a few acres in extent—

And Andersonville, sir, embraced twenty-seven acres.

and through which slowly flowed a turbid stream of water, carrying along with it all the excremental filth and *debris* of the camp; this stream of water, horrible to relate, was the only source of supply, for an extended period, that the prisoners could possibly use for the purpose of ablution and to slack their thirst from day to day; the tents and other shelter allotted to the camp at Elmira were insufficient and crowded to the utmost extent; hence small-pox and other skin diseases raged through the camp.

Here I may note that, owing to a general order from the Government to vaccinate the prisoners, my opportunities were ample to observe the effects of spurious and diseased matter, and there is no doubt in my mind but that syphilis was ingrafted in many instances; ugly and horrible ulcers and eruptions of a characteristic nature were, alas! too frequent and obvious to be mistaken. small-pox cases were crowded in such a manner that it was a matter of impossibility for the surgeon to treat his patient individually; they actually laid so adjacent that the simple movement of one would cause his neighbor to cry out in an agony of pain. The confluent and malignant type prevailed to such an extent and of such a nature that the body would frequently be found one continuous scab.

The diet and other allowances by the Government for the use of the prisoners were ample, yet the poor unfortunates were allowed to starve,

Now, sir, the Confederate regulations authorized ample provisions for Federal prisoners, the same that was made for Confederate soldiers, and you charge that Mr. Davis is responsible for not having those allowances honestly supplied. The United States made provisions for Confederate prisoners, so far as rations were concerned, for feeding those in Federal hands; and yet what says the surgeon? "They were allowed to starve."

But "why?" is a query which I will allow your readers to infer and to draw conclusions therefrom. Out of the number of prisoners, as before mentioned, over three thousand of them now lay buried in the cemetery located near the camp for that purpose—a mortality equal if not greater than that of any prison in the South. At Andersonville, as I am well informed by brother-officers who endured confinement there, as well as by the records at Washington, the mortality was twelve thousand out of, say, forty thousand prisoners. Hence it is readily to be seen that the range of mortallty was no less at Elmira than at Andersonville.

Mr. PLATT. Will the gentlemen allow me to interrupt him a moment to ask him where he gets that statement?

Mr. HILL. It is the statement of a Federal surgeon published in the New York World.

Mr. PLATT. I desire to say that I live within thirty-six miles of Elmira, and that those statements are unqualifiedly false.

Mr. HILL. Yes, and I supposed if one rose from the dead the gentleman would not believe him.

Mr. PLATT. Does the gentleman say that those statements are true?

Mr. HILL. Certainly I do not say that they are true, but I do say that I believe the statement of the surgeon in charge before that of a politician thirty-six miles away. Now will the gentleman believe testimony from the dead? The Bible says, "The tree is known by its fruits." And, after all, what is the test of suffering of these prisoners North and South? The test is the result. Now I call the attention of gentlemen to this fact, that the report of Mr. Stanton, the Secretary of War—you will believe him, will you not?—on the 19th of July, 1866—send to the Library and get it—exhibits the fact that of the Federal prisoners in confederate hands during the war, only 22,576 died, while of the confederate prisoners in Federal hands 26,436 died. And Surgeon-General Barnes reports in an official report—I suppose you will believe him—that in round numbers the confederate prisoners in Federal hands amounted to 220,000, while the Federal prisoners in confederate hands

amounted to 270,000. Out of the 270,000 in confederate hands 22,000 died, while of the 220,000 confederates in Federal hands over 26,000 died. The ratio is this: More than 12 per cent. of the confederates in Federal hands died, and less than 9 per cent. of the Federals in confederate hands died. What is the logic of these facts according to the gentleman from Maine? I scorn to charge murder upon the officials of northern prisons, as the gentleman has done upon confederate prison officials. I labor to demonstrate that such miseries are inevitable in prison life, no matter how humane the regulations. I would scorn, too, to use a newspaper article, unless it were signed by one who gave his own name and whose statement, if not true, can be disproved, and I would believe such a one in preference to any politician over there who was thirty-six miles away from Elmira. That gentleman, so prompt to contradict a surgeon, might perhaps have smelled the small-pox but he could not see it, and I venture to say that if he knew the small-pox was there he would have taken very good care to keep thirty-six miles away. He is a wonderful witness. He is not even equal to the mutilated evidence brought in yesterday. But, sir, it appears from the official record that the confederates came from Elmira, from Fort Delaware and from Rock Island, and other places with their fingers frozen off, with their toes frozen off, and with teeth dropped out.

But the great question is behind. Every American, North or South, must lament that our country has ever impeached its civilization by such an exhibition of horrors on any side, and I speak of these things with no degree of pleasure. God knows if I could hide them from the view of the world I would gladly do it. But the great question is, at last, who was responsible for this state of things? And that is really the only material question with which statesmen now should deal. Sir, it is well known that, when the war opened, at first the authorities of the United States determined that they would not exchange prisoners. The first prisoners captured by the Federal forces were the crew of the Savannah, and they were put in chains and sentenced to be executed. Jefferson Davis hearing of this, communicated through the lines, and the confederates having meanwhile also captured prisoners, he threatened retaliation in case those men suffered, and the sentences against the crew of the Savannah were not executed. Subsequently our friends from this way —I believe my friend before me from New York [Mr. Cox] was one—insisted that there should be a cartel for the exchange of prisoners. In 1862 that cartel was agreed upon. In substance and briefly it was that there should be an exchange of man for man and officer for officer, and whichever held an excess at the time of exchange should parole the excess. This worked very well until 1863. I am going over the facts very briefly.

Mr. STARKWEATHER. I do not wish, and none on this side wishes to interrupt the gentleman. I believe he has spoken over his hour. We desire that he shall speak as long as he chooses, but we wish to have a free discussion and want a little time on this side.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Georgia has not exhausted his hour yet.

Mr. HILL. I was reciting briefly the facts. In 1863 this cartel was interrupted; the Federal authorities refused to continue the exchange. Now commenced a history which the world ought to know, and which I hope the House will grant me the privilege of stating, and I shall do it from official records. This, I say frankly to the gentlemen on the other side, was in truth one of the severest blows stricken at the Confederacy, this refusal to exchange prisoners in 1863 and continued through 1864. The Confederates made every effort to renew the cartel. Among other things, on the 2d of July, 1863, the Vice-President of the Confederacy, the gentleman to whom the gentleman from Maine [Mr BLAINE] alluded the other day in so complimentary terms, Mr. Alexander H. Stephens, was absolutely commissioned by President Davis to cross the lines and come to Washington to consult with the Federal authorities, with a broad commission to agree upon any cartel satisfactory to the other side for the exchange of prisoners. Mr. Davis said to him, "Your mission is simply one of humanity, and has no political aspect." Mr. Stephens undertook that work. What was the result? I wish to be careful, and I will state this exactly correctly. Here is his letter:

CONFEDERATE STATES STEAMER TORPEDO,
In James River, July 4, 1863.

SIR: As military commissioner, I am the bearer of a communication in writing from Jefferson Davis, commander-in-chief of the land and naval forces of the Confederates States, to Abraham Lincoln, Commander-in-chief of the land and naval forces of the United States. Hon Robert Ould, Confederate States agent of exchange, accompanies me as secretary, for the purpose of delivering the communication in person and conferring upon the subject to which it relates. I desire to proceed to Washington in the steamer Torpedo, commanded by Lieutenant Hunter Davidson, of the

Confederate States navy, no person being on board but Hon. Mr. Ould, myself, and the boat's officers and crew.

Yours, most respectfully,

ALEX. H. STEPHENS.

To S. H. Lee, *Admiral.*

This was directed to S. H. Lee, admiral. Here is the answer:

Acting Rear-Admiral S. H. Lee, *Hampton Roads:*

The request of Alexander H. Stephens is inadmissible. * * *

GIDEON WELLES, *Secretary of the Navy.*

You will acknowledge that Mr. Stephens' humane mission failed. The Confederate authorities gave to that mission as much dignity and character as possible. They supposed that of all men in the South Mr. Stephens most nearly had your confidence. They selected him to be the bearer of messages for the sake of humanity in behalf of the brave Federal soldiers who were unfortunately prisoners of war. The Federal Government would not even receive him; the Federal authorities would not hear him.

What was the next effort? After Mr. Stephens' mission failed the commissioner for the exchange of prisoners, Colonel Ould, having exhausted all his efforts to get the cartel renewed, on the 24th January, 1864, wrote the following letter to Major-General E. A. Hitchcock, agent of exchange on the Federal side:

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA, WAR DEPARTMENT,
Richmond, Virginia, January 24, 1864.

SIR: In view of the difficulties attending the exchange and release of prisoners, I propose that all such on either side shall be attended by a proper number of their own surgeons, who, under rules to be established, shall be permitted to take charge of their health and comfort. I also propose that these surgeons shall act as commissaries, with power to receive and distribute such contributions of money, food, clothing, and medicines as may be forwarded for the relief of the prisoners. I further propose that these surgeons shall be selected by their own government, and that they shall have full liberty, at any and all times, through the agents of exchange, to make reports not only of their own acts, but of any matters relating to the welfare of the prisoners

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

ROBERT OULD, *Agent of Exchange.*

Major-General E. A. HITCHCOCK, *Agent of Exchange.*

The SPEAKER. The hour of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. RANDALL. I move the gentleman from Georgia be allowed to proceed.

Mr. BLAINE. I do not object; but before the gentleman from Georgia passes from the subject upon which he is now speaking, I would be glad to know——

The SPEAKER. If there be no objection the gentleman from Georgia will have leave to proceed.

There was no objection.

Mr. BLAINE. I believe the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. HILL] was a member of the Confederate Senate. I find in a historical book of some authenticity of character that in the Confederate Congress, Senator Hill, of Georgia, introduced the following resolution, relating to prisoners.

Mr. HILL. You are putting me on trial now, are you? Go ahead.

Mr. BLAINE. This is the resolution.

That every person pretending to be a soldier or officer of the United States who shall be captured on the soil of the Confederate States after the 1st day of January, 1863, shall be presumed to have entered the territory of the Confederate States with the intent to incite insurrection and abet murder; and, unless satisfactory proof be adduced to the contrary before the military court before which the trial shall be had, shall suffer death. This section shall continue in force until the proclamation issued by Abraham Lincoln, dated at Washington on the 22d day of September, 1862, shall be rescinded, and the policy therein announced shall be abandoned, and no longer.

Mr. HILL. I will say to the gentleman from Maine very frankly that I have not the slightest recollection of ever hearing that resolution before.

Mr. BLAINE. The gentleman does not deny, however, that he was the author of it?

Mr. HILL. I do not know. My own impression is that I was not the author; but I do not pretend to recollect the circumstances. If the gentleman can give me the circumstances under which the resolution was introduced, they might recall the matter to my mind.

Mr. BLAINE. Allow me to read further:

October 1, 1862.—The judiciary committee of the confederate congress made a report and offered a set of resolutions upon the subject of President Lincoln's proclamation, from which the following are extracts:

2. Every white person who shall act as a commissioned or non commissioned officer commanding negroes or mulattoes against the Confederate States, or who shall arm, organize, train, or prepare negroes or mulattoes for military service, or aid them in any military enterprise against the Confederate States, shall, if captured, suffer death.

3. Every commissioned or non-commissioned officer of the enemy who shall incite slaves to re-

bellion, or pretend to give them freedom under the aforementioned act of Congress and proclamation, by abducting or causing them to be abducted or inducing them to abscond, shall, if captured, suffer death.

Thereupon Senator Hill, of Georgia, is recorded as having offered the resolution I have read.

Mr. HILL. I was Chairman of the Judiciary Committee of the Senate.

Mr. BLAINE. And this resolution came directly from that committee?

Mr. HILL. It is very probable that, like the Chairman of the Committee on the Rules at the last session, I may have consented to that report. [Laughter.]

Mr. BLAINE. The gentleman then admits that he did make that report?

Mr. HILL. I really do not remember it. I think it very likely.

A MEMBER, (to Mr. BLAINE.) What is the book?

Mr. BLAINE. The book from which I have read is entitled "Republicanism in America," by R. Guy McClellan. It appears to be a book of good credit and authenticity. I merely want it settled whether the gentleman from Georgia was or was not the author of that resolution.

Mr. HILL. I say to the gentleman frankly that I really do not remember.

Mr. BLAINE. The gentleman does not say he was not the author.

Mr. HILL. I do not. I will say this; I think I was not the author. Possibly I reported the resolution. It refers in terms to "pretended," not real soldiers.

Mr. BLAINE. I thought that inasmuch as the gentleman's line of argument was to show the character of the Confederate policy, this might aid him a little in calling up the facts pertinent thereto. [Laughter and applause.]

Mr. HILL. With all due deference to the gentleman, I reply he did not think any such thing. He thought he would divert me from the purpose of my argument and break its force by——

Mr. BLAINE. Oh no.

Mr. HILL. He thought he would get up a discussion about certain measures presented in the Confederate Congress having no relation to the subject now under discussion, but which grew out of the peculiar relation of the Southern States to a population then in servitude—a population which the Confederate Government feared might be incited to insurrection—and measures were doubtless proposed which the Confederate Government may have thought it proper to take to protect helpless women and children in the South from insurrection. But I shall not allow myself to be diverted by the gentleman to go either into the history of slavery or of domestic insurrection, or, as a friend near me suggests, "John Brown's raid." I know this, that if I or any gentlemen on the committee was the author of that resolution, which I think more than probable, our purpose was not to do injustice to any man, woman, or child North or South, but to adopt what we deemed stringent measures within the laws of war to protect our wives and children from servile insurrection and slaughter while our brave sons were in the front. That is all, sir.

But, sir, I have read a letter from the Confederate Commissioner of exchange, written in 1864, proposing that each side send surgeons with the prisoners; that they nurse and treat the prisoners; that the Federal authorities should send as many as they pleased; that those surgeons be commissioned also as commissaries to furnish supplies of clothing and food and everything else needed for the comfort of prisoners.

Now, sir, how did the Federal Government treat that offer? It broke the cartel for the exchange of prisoners; it refused to entertain a proposition, even when Mr. Stephens headed the commission, to renew it; and then, sir, when the Confederates proposed that their own surgeons should accompany the prisoners of the respective armies, the Federal authorities did not answer the letter. No reply was ever received.

Then, again, in August, 1864, the Confederates made two more propositions. I will state that the cartel of exchange was broken by the Federal authorities for certain alleged reasons. Well, in August, 1864, prisoners accumulating on both sides to such an extent, and the Federal Government having refused every proposition from the Confederate authorities to provide for the comfort and treatment of these prisoners, the Confederates next proposed, in a letter from Colonel Ould, dated the 10th of August, 1864, waiving every objection the Federal Government had made, to agree to any and all terms to renew the exchange of prisoners, man for man and officer for officer, as the Federal Government should prescribe. Yet, sir, the latter rejected that proposition. It took a second letter to bring an answer to that proposition.

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Then, again, in that same month of August, 1864, the Confederate authorities did this: Finding that the Federal Government would not exchange prisoners at all, that it would not let surgeons go into the Confederacy; finding that it would not let medicines be sent into the Confederacy; meanwhile the ravages of war continuing and depleting the scant supplies of the South, which was already unable to feed adequately its own defenders, and much less able to properly feed and clothe the thousands of prisoners in Confederate prisons, what did the Confederates propose? They proposed to send the Federal sick and wounded prisoners without equivalent. Now, sir, I want the House and the country to understand this: that in August, 1864, the Confederate Government officially proposed to Federal authorities that if they would send steamships or transportation in any form to Savannah, they should have their sick and wounded prisoners without equivalent. That proposition, communicated to the Federal authorities in August, 1864, was not answered until December, 1864. In December, 1864, the Federal Government sent ships to Savannah. Now, the records will show that the chief suffering at Andersonville was between August and December. The Confederate authorities sought to avert it by asking the Federal Government to come and take its prisoners without equivalent, without return, and it refused to do that until four or five months had elapsed.

That is not the only appeal which was made to the Federal Government. I now call the attention of the House to another appeal. It was from the Federal prisoners themselves. They knew as well as the Southern people did the mission of Mr. Stephens. They knew the offer of January 24, for surgeons, for medicine and clothing, for comforts and food, and for provisions of every sort. They knew that the Confederate authorities had offered to let these be sent to them by their own Government. They knew that had been rejected. They knew of the offer of August 10, 1864. They knew of the other offer, to return sick and wounded without an equivalent. They knew all these offers had been rejected. Therefore they held a meeting and passed the following resolutions; and I call the attention of the gentlemen on the other side to these resolutions. I ask if they will not believe the surgeons of their hospitals; if they will not believe Mr. Stanton's report, if they will not believe Surgeon-General Barnes's report, I beg from them to know if they will not believe the earnest, heart-rending appeal of those starving, suffering heroes? Here are the resolutions passed by the Federal prisoners the 28th of September, 1864.

Resolved, That while allowing the Confederate authorities all due praise for the attention paid to our prisoners, numbers of our men are daily consigned to early graves, in the prime of manhood, far from home and kindred and this is not caused intentionally by the Confederate Government, but by the force of circumstances.

Brave men are always honest, and true soldiers never slander. They say the horrors they suffered were not intentional, that the Confederate Government had done all it could to avert them. Sir, I believe this testimony of gallant men as being of the highest character, coming from the sufferers themselves.

They further resolved:

The Prisoner is obliged to go without shelter, and in a great portion of cases without medicine.

Resolved, That whereas in the fortune of war it was our lot to become prisoners. We have suffered patiently, and are still willing to suffer, if by so doing we can benefit the country; but we would most respectfully beg to say that we are not willing to suffer to further the ends of any party or clique to the detriment of our own honor, our families, and our country. And we would beg this affair be explained to us, that we may continue to hold the Government in the respect which is necessary to make a good citizen and soldier.

Was this touching appeal heeded? Let any gentleman who belonged to the "clique or party" that the resolutions condemn answer for his party.

Now, sir, it was in reference to that state of things, exactly that Dr. Jones reported, as I have already read to the House, in his report which was mutilated before that Committee of Congress and in the trial of Wirz—it was in consequence of that very state of things that Dr. Jones said that depression of mind and despondency and home-sickness of these poor prisoners carried more to their graves than did physical causes of disease. That was not wonderful at all.

But Mr. Speaker, why were all these appeals resisted? Why did the Federal authorities refuse to allow their own surgeons to go with their own soldiers, and carry them medicine and clothing and comfort and treatment? Why? Why did they refuse to exchange man for man and officer for officer? Why did they refuse to stand up to their own solemn engagements, made in 1862, for the exchange of prisoners? Who is at fault? There must be a reason for this. That is the next point to which I wish to call the attention of the House. Sir, listen to the reading.

The New York Tribune, referring to this matter in 1864, said—I suppose you will believe the Tribune in 1864, if you do not believe it now:

In August the rebels offered to renew the exchange man for man. General Grant then telegraphed the following important order: It is hard on our men held in southern prisons not to exchange them, but it is humanity to those left in the ranks to fight our battles. Every man released on parole or otherwise becomes an active soldier against us at once, either directly or indirectly. If we commence a system of exchange which liberates all prisoners taken, we will have to fight on till the whole South is exterminated. If we hold those caught, they amount to no more than dead men. At this particular time to release all rebel prisoners North would insure Sherman's defeat and would compromise our safety here.

Mr. GARFIELD. What date is that?

Mr. HILL. Eighteen hundred and sixty-four.

Mr. GARFIELD. What date in that year?

Mr. HILL. I do not note the day or month. I have read the telegram which is taken from the New York Tribune, after August, 1864.

Here is General Grant's testimony before the Committee on the exchange of prisoners, February 11, 1865. You believe him, do you not?

Question. It has been said that we refused to exchange prisoners because we found ours starved, diseased, and unserviceable when we received them, and did not like to exchange sound men for such men.

That was the question propounded to him. His answer was:

Answer. There never has been any such reason as that. That has been a reason for making exchanges. I will confess that if our men who are prisoners in the South were really well taken care of, suffering nothing except a little privation of liberty, then, in a military point of view, it would not be good policy for us to exchange, because every man they got back is forced right into the army at once, while that is not the case with our prisoners when we receive them; in fact, the half of our returned prisoners will never go into the Army again, and none of them will until after they have had a furlough of thirty or sixty days Still, the fact of their suffering as they do is a reason for making this exchange is rapidly as possible.

Q. And never has been a reason for not making the exchange?

A, It never has. Exchanges having been suspended by reason of disagreement on the par of agents of exchange on both sides before I came in command of the armies of the United States, and it then being near the opening of the spring campaign I did not deem it advisable or just to the men who had to fight our battles to reinforce the enemy with thir y or forty thousand disciplined troops at that time. An immediate resumption of exchange would have had that effect withou giving us corresponding benefits. The suffering said to exist among our prisoners South was a powerful argument against the course pursued, and so I felt it.

There is no disputing the fact that, with the knowledge that his prisoners were suffering in the South, he insisted that the exchange should not be renewed, because it would increase the military power of the enemy. Now, that may have been a good military reason. I do not quote it for the purpose of reflecting upon General Grant in the slightest. I am giving the facts of history. I insist that the Confederacy shall not be held responsible for the results of the war policy of the Federal Government, especially when the record proves that the Confederate authorities made every possible effort to avert these results. Nor do I allege inhumanity on the part of General Grant or the Federal Government. I give you the facts, and I have given you General Grant's interpretation of those facts. Let the world judge.

Now, sir, we have other authority upon that subject. Here is a letter by Junius Henri Browne. I do not know the gentleman. He signs his name to the letter. He writes like a scholar. He is a northern gentleman, and I am not aware that his statement has ever been contradicted. Now, what does he say:

NEW YORK, *August* 8, 1865.

Moreover, General Butler, in his speech at Lowell, Massachusetts, stated positively that he had been ordered by Mr. Stanton to put forward the negro question to complicate and prevent the exchange. * * * Every one is aware that when the exchange did take place not the slightest alteration had occurred in the question, and that our prisoners might as well have been released twelve or eighteen months before as at the resumption of the cartel, which would have saved to the Republic at least twelve or fifteen thousand heroic lives.

That they were not saved is due alone to Edwin M. Stanton's peculiar policy and dogged obstinacy; and, as I have remarked before, he is unquestionably the digger of the unnamed graves that crowd the vicinity of every southern prison with historic and never to be forgotten horrors.

That is the testimony of a northern man against Mr. Stanton: And he goes on:

I regret the revival of this painful subject, but the gratuitous effort of Mr. Dana to relieve the Secretary of War from a responsbiilty he seems willing to bear, and which merely as a question of policy independent of all considerations of humanity must be regarded as of great weight, has compelled me to vindicate myself from the charge of making grave statements without due consideration.

Once for all, let me declare that I have never found fault with any one because I was detained in prison, for I am well aware that that was a matter in which no one but myself and possibly a few personal friends would feel any interest; that my sole motive for impeaching the Secretary of War was that the people of the loyal North might know to

whom they were indebted for the cold-blooded and needless sacrifice of their fathers and brothers, their husbands and their sons.

I understand that Mr. Browne is a contributer to Harper's Monthly, and was then. The man, so he tells you, who was responsible for these atrocities at Andersonville was the late Secretary of War, Mr. Stanton.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what have I proven? I have proven that the Federal authorities broke the cartel for the exchange of prisoners deliberately; I have proven that they refused to re-open that cartel when it was proposed by Mr. Stephens, as a commissioner, solely on the ground of humanity; I have proven that they made medicine contraband of war, and thereby left the South to the dreadful necessity of treating their own prisoners with such medicine as could be improvised in the Confederacy; I have proven that they refused to allow surgeons of their own appointment, of their own Army, to accompany their prisoners in the South, with full license and liberty to carry food, medicine, and raiment, and every comfort that the prisoners might need; I have proven that when the Federal Government made the pretext for interrupting the cartel for the exchange of prisoners, the Confederates yielded every point and proposed to exchange prisoners on the terms of the Federal Government, and that the latter refused it; I have proven that the Confederates then proposed to return the Federal sick and wounded without equivalent in August, 1864, and never got a reply until December, 1864; I have proven that high Federal officers gave as the reason why they would not exchange prisoners that it would be humanity to the prisoners but cruelty to the soldiers in the field, and therefore it was a part of the Federal military policy, to let Federal prisoners suffer rather than that the Confederacy should have an increase of its military force, and the Federal Government refused it, when by such exchange it would have received more prisoners than it returned to the Confederates.

Now, what is the answer to all this? Against whom does the charge lie, if there are to be accusations of any, for the horrors of Andersonville?

Mr. BRIGHT. What was the percentage of deaths in the prisons?

Mr. HILL. I have already given it. I have proved also that, with all the horrors at Andersonville, the gentleman from Maine has so ostentatiously paraded, and for an obvious partisan purpose of exciting upon this floor a bitter sectional discussion, from which his party, and perhaps himself, may be the beneficiary, greater sufferings occurred in the prisons where Confederate soldiers were confined, and that the percentage of death was 3 per cent. greater among Confederate troops in Federal hands than among Federal soldiers held by the Confederates. And I need not state the contrast between the needy Confederacy and the abundance of Federal supplies and resources.

Now, sir, when the gentleman rises again to give breath to that effusion of unmitigated genius without fact to sustain it, in which he says:

> And I here, before God, measuring my words, knowing their full extent and import, declare that neither the needs of the Duke of Alva in the Low Countries, nor the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, nor the thumb screws and engines of torture of the Spanish Inquisition, begin to compare in atrocity with the hideous crime of Andersonville.

Let him add that the mortality at Andersonville and other Confederate prisons falls short by more than 3 per cent. the mortality in Federal prisons.

Sir, if any man will reflect a moment he will see that there was reason why the Confederate Government should desire exchange of prisoners. It was scarce of food, pinched for clothing, closed up with a blockade of its ports; it needed troops; its ranks were thinning.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is proper that I should read one or two sentences from the man who has been arraigned as the vilest murderer in history. After the battles around Richmond, in which McClellan was defeated, some ten thousand prisoners fell into the hands of the Confederacy. Victory had perched upon its standard, and the rejoicing naturally following victory was heard in the ranks of the Confederate army, Mr. Davis went out to make a gratulatory speech. Now, gentlemen of the House, gentlemen of the other side, if you are willing to do justice, let me simply call your attention to the words of this man that then fell from his lips in the hour of victory. Speaking to the soldiers, he said:

> You are fighting for all that is dearest to man; and, though opposed to a foe who disregards many of the usages of civilized war, your humanity to the wounded and prisoners was a fit and crowning glory to your valor.

Above the victory, above every other consideration, even that victory which they believed insured protection to their homes and families, he tells them that at last their crowning glory was their humanity to the wounded and prisoners who had fallen into their hands.

The gentleman from Maine yesterday introduced the Richmond Examiner as a witness in his behalf. Now it is a rule of law that a man cannot impeach his own witness. It is true the Examiner hated Mr. Davis with a cordial hatred. The gentleman could not have introduced the testimony of perhaps a bitterer foe to Mr. Davis. Why did it hate him? Here are its reasons: "The chivalry and humanity of Jefferson Davis will inevitably ruin the Confederacy." That is your witness, and the witness is worthy of your cause. You introduced the witness to prove Mr. Davis guilty of inhumanity, and he tells you that the humanity of Mr. Davis will ruin the confederacy. That is not all. In the same paper it says: "The enemy have gone from one unmanly cruelty to another." Recollect, this is your witness. "The enemy have gone from one unmanly cruelty to another." Encouraged by their impunity till they are now and have for some time been inflicting on the people of this country the worst horrors of barbarous and uncivilized war." Yet in spite of all this the Examiner alleged "Mr. Davis in his dealing with the enemy was as gentle as a sucking dove."

Mr. GARFIELD. What volume is that?

Mr. HILL. The same volume, page 531, and is taken from the Richmond Examiner—the paper the gentleman quoted from yesterday. And that is the truth. Those of us who were there at the time know it to be the fact. One of the persistent charges brought by that paper and some others against Mr. Davis was his humanity. Over and over again Mr. Davis has been heard to say, and I use his very language, when applied to to retaliate for the horrors inflicted upon our prisoners, "The inhumanity of the enemy to our prisoners can be no justification for a disregard by us of the rules of civilized war and of Christianity." Therefore he persisted in it, and this paper cried out against him that it would ruin the confederacy.

I am sure I owe this House an apology for having detained it so long; I shall detain it but a few moments longer. After all, what should men do who really desire the restoration of peace and to prevent the recurrence of the horrors of war? How ought they to look at this question? Sir, war is always horrible; war always brings hardships; it brings death, it brings sorrow, it brings ruin, it brings devastation. And he is unworthy to be called a statesman, looking to the pacification of this country, who will parade the horrors inseparable from war for the purpose of keeping up the strife that produced the war.

I do not doubt that I am the bearer of an unwelcome message to the gentleman from Maine and his party. He says that there are confederates in this body, and that they are going to combine with a few from the North for the purpose of controlling this Government. If one were to listen to the gentleman on the other side he would be in doubt whether they rejoiced more when the South left the Union, or regretted most when the South came back to the Union that their fathers helped to form, and to which they will forever hereafter contribute as much of patriotic ardor, of noble devotion, and of willing sacrifice as the constituents of the gentleman from Maine. O, Mr. Speaker, why cannot gentlemen on the other side rise to the height of this great argument of patriotism? Is the bosom of the country always to be torn with this miserable sectional debate whenever a presidential election is pending? To that great debate of half a century before secession there were left no adjourned questions. The victory of the North was absolute, and God knows the submission of the South was complete. But, sir, we have recovered from the humiliation of defeat, and we come here among you and we ask you to give us the greetings accorded to brothers by brothers. We propose to join you in every patriotic endeavor and to unite with you in every patriotic aspiration that looks to the benefit, the advancement, and the honor of every part of our common country. Let us, gentlemen of all parties, in this centennial year indeed have a jubilee of freedom. We divide with you the glories of the Revolution and of the succeeding years of our national life before that unhappy division—that four years' night of gloom and despair—and so we shall divide with you the glories of all the future.

Sir, my message is this: There are no confederates in this House; there are now no confederates anywhere; there are no confederate schemes, ambitions, hopes, desires, or purposes here. But the South is here, and here she intends to remain. [Enthusiastic applause.] Go on and pass your qualifying acts, trample upon the Constitution you have sworn to support; abnegate the pledges of your fathers, incite raids upon our people, and multiply your infidelities until they shall be like the stars of heaven or the sands of the seashore, without number; but know this, for all your iniquities the South will never again seek a remedy in the madness of

another secession. [Continued applause.] We are here; we are in the house of our fathers, our brothers are our companions, and we are at home to stay, thank God. [Much applause.]

We come to gratify no revenges, to retaliate no wrongs, to resent no past insults, to re-open no strife. We come with a patriotic purpose to do whatever in our political power shall lie to restore an honest, economical, and constitutional administration of the Government. We come charging upon the Union no wrongs to us. The Union never wronged us. The Union has been an unmixed blessing to every section, to every State, to every man of every color in America. We charge all our wrongs upon that "higher law" fanaticism, that never kept a pledge nor obeyed a law. The South did seek to leave the association of those who, she believed, would not keep fidelity to their covenants; the South sought to go to herself; but, so far from having lost our fidelity for the Constitution which our fathers made, when we sought to go we hugged that Constitution to our bosoms and carried it with us.

Brave Union men of the North, followers of Webster and Fillmore, of Clay and Cass, and Douglass—you who fought for the Union for the sake of the Union; you who ceased to fight when the battle ended and the sword was sheathed—we have no quarrel with you, whether Republicans or Democrats. We felt your heavy arm in the carnage of battle; but above the roar of the cannon we heard your voice of kindness, calling, "Brothers, come back!" And we bear witness to you this day that that voice of kindness did more to thin the Confederate ranks and weaken the Confederate arm than did all the artillery employed in the struggle. We are here to co-operate with you; to do whatever we can, in spite of all our sorrows, to rebuild the Union; to restore peace; to be a blessing to the country, and to make the American Union what our fathers intended it to be: the glory of America and a blessing to humanity.

But to you, gentlemen, who seek still to continue strife, and who, not satisfied with the sufferings already endured, the blood already shed, the waste already committed, insist that we shall be treated as criminals and oppressed as victims, only because we defended our convictions—to you we make no concessions. To you who followed up the war after the brave soldiers that fought it had made peace and gone to their homes—to you we have no concessions to offer. Martyrs owe no apologies to tyrants. And while we are ready to make every sacrifice for the Union, even secession, however defeated and humbled, will confess no sins to fanaticism, however bigoted and exacting.

Yet, while we make to you no concession, we come even to you in no spirit of revenge. We would multiply blessings in common for you and for us. We have but one ambition, and that is to add our political power to the patriotic Union men of the North in order to compel fanaticism to obey the law and live in the Union according to the Constitution. We do not propose to compel you by oaths, for you who breed strife only to get office and power will not keep oaths.

Sir, we did the Union one great wrong. The Union never wronged the South; but we of the South did to the Union one great wrong; and we come as far as we can, to repair it. We wronged the Union grievously when we left it to be seized and rent and torn by the men who had denounced it as "a covenant with hell and and a league with the devil." We ask you, gentlemen of the republican party, to rise above all your animosities. Forget your own sins. Let us unite to repair the evils that distract and oppress the country. Let us turn our backs upon the past, and let it be said in the future that he shall be the greatest patriot, the truest patriot, the noblest patriot, who shall do most to repair the wrongs of the past and promote the glories of the future. [Applause on the floor and in the galleries.]